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to say, "I don't much care whether you escape me or not." I however gave him plenty of time and then landed him. If I had been too quick with the first, I was too slow with this, for the hook had quite disappeared, so that a knife was necessary to disengage it, and my prize was so much disfigured as to spoil it for a specimen. It was now nearly dark, and without another cast I hastened home, where I found my party busily engaged discussing a comfortable dinner. Senator H. suspended his gastronomic occupation and carefully examined my prize, and then deliberately surveyed the captor, and at last profoundly remarked, "this should be considered no exception to the rule of this valley that the trout will not bite a white man's hook. The fish should be pardoned, for the mistake was most natural." And then the whole party, with a spirit only known in a jovial excursion party determined to make the most of every incident, struck up "so say we all of us." I forgave the ladies at least, for nearly all had excellent voices and were always ready to use them on the least provocation; but I yet owe the senator *one*.

THE ESQUIMAUX DOG.

BY H. M. BANNISTER.

THE study of the domestic animals of a barbarous nation or tribe is chiefly interesting as throwing some additional light upon their physical and intellectual status, and is therefore a fit adjunct to the study of their ethnological and historical relations. When, however, the species are, as it were, unique in this capacity, or when through domestication any very remarkable variation from the usual type appears to have been produced, they then become of more general interest. Under this latter class we may place the

Esquimaux Dog; and, although it may require more of faith in the Darwinian hypothesis than every one feels obliged to possess, to acknowledge it as a distinct species from the "curs of low degree" which infest our civilization, no one will fail to concede that it is a sufficiently well marked variety. Being thus remarkable, it has received more or less notice from nearly every voyager on the more northern coasts of our continent; and notwithstanding that the subject is therefore not entirely new, I venture to add a few observations of my own, made during a residence of about a year on the coasts of Alaska, near Behring's Straits.

There is no necessity of going into detail as to the general appearance of our subject, in this place, as descriptions are sufficiently numerous and accessible in works of travel, cyclopedias, etc., the habits and peculiarities in other respects, affording sufficient grounds for remarks. Suffice it merely to say, that with his heavy, but even coat of hair filling up and rounding off the hollows and angles of his body, his bushy tail curling over his back, erect ears, and the generally intelligent expression of countenance, the Esquimaux Dog may be called a rather handsome animal. The average size appears to me to have been overestimated in some of the descriptions, although the breed may attain larger dimensions in other regions than that in which I observed it. A few individuals were seen which approached or equalled in size the Newfoundland dog, but by far the greater number were decidedly smaller, some appearing even diminutive in comparison; still, however, preserving all the characteristic marks of the variety. In color they vary from white to black through the different shades of gray and brown, a very large proportion being piebald. Some of these variations in size and color may perhaps be owing to a slight admixture of foreign blood, as there are among the Alaska Esquimaux a large number of mongrels, with the Indian dogs of the interior, the Siberian dogs introduced by the Russians, and doubtless with various forms of the dogs

of civilization, even down to the familiar "yellow dog," of which variety one or two quite typical specimens were seen during my stay in the country; in these instances, most probably introduced by whalers. The Siberian dogs themselves, as seen in Kamtchatka are not always very different from the Esquimaux type, and the dogs of the sedentary Tchuktchi, or Asiatic Esquimaux, are, if not the same as those of the American coast, a very nearly allied variety. From the regular traffic which has been carried on from time immemorial across the straits, we may infer that a very considerable mixture has been made between the dogs of the two continents. The natives frequently take their dogs with them in their summer trips by water; and a full loaded oomiak under sail, with its lading rising a foot or so above the gunwale amidships, and kept from falling overboard by sticks stuck up on each side, one or two kayaks carried athwartships over all, or towing astern, and with its full complement of male Innuits, squaws, papooses and dogs, is rather astonishing to one's preconceived ideas of Esquimaux navigation.

The external coating of long hair is underlaid in the Esquimaux dog by a denser mat of closely interwoven fibres, which, though coarse, seem to have sufficient length and toughness to allow of its being spun out into thread. I have seen, indeed, a blanket, brought from the Mackenzie's River District of the Hudson Bay Territory, which was said to have been woven from dog's hair, probably of this, or a closely related variety, the Hare Indian dog. In the summer time this wool may be easily pulled off in large patches provided the animal is kind enough to allow the handling, which is not invariably the case. This, with the dense covering of shorter hairs on their legs and feet, appears to make them indifferent to almost any degree of cold, as they frequently and habitually pass the bitterest nights and fiercest storms of the arctic winter, with no other shelter than is afforded by the lee side of a native hut, and sometimes without even that. Nor do other apparent sources of dis-

comfort appear to trouble them much. I remember seeing at St. Michael's, during one of the coldest days of December, one of the Fort dogs comfortably asleep on the steps leading to the door of a store-house, with his hinder quarters at the top, and his head near the bottom, his whole body some twenty or thirty degrees out of the horizontal. Another advantage of their heavy outer covering, and not an inconsiderable one, is that it enables them the better to undergo the disciplinary ordeal of the whip, enough in some intances, it would seem, to make raw hide thongs of an ordinary dog skin.

The Esquimaux dog does not bark, and this, together with the short quick snap of his bite, is the most wolfish trait which he retains from his supposed ancestry. There is, however, no lack of voice, or the exercise of it; he howls most dismally whenever the spirit moves him. Those who have had experiences of wolves and coyotes on the plains, can form but a faint idea of what it is to have two or three dozen Esquimaux dogs howling in concert within a few feet of one's head. The noise will go through two or three log partitions, and then be altogether trying to human nerves. There are times, nevertheless, when it is rather comical than otherwise; as, for instance, when they exert themselves in this direction in starting on a journey. As soon as the sled is brought out, and while the load is being adjusted upon it, the dogs gather around, and, fairly dancing with excitement, raise their voices in about a dozen unmelodious strains. There are often one or two who have to be dragged up to their duty by a whip-lash around their necks, and they add their peculiarly lugubrious, half strangled notes to the general discord. This kind of row is renewed every time they start, until travel and hard work have taken the spirit out of them, when they go to their work in a dogged, business-like manner without any particular uproar.

From five to seven dogs are generally used together in a team, though the poorer natives often make shift to get along

with a less number, a single dog being sometimes made to do duty alone. On the other hand the Russian traders, and more rarely the Esquimaux, occasionally put eight and nine dogs in a single team. The pups, as soon as they are able to travel, are fastened up with the older dogs, and learn their business very rapidly. Once in a while one breaks down on a journey, and is then often inhumanly abandoned where he drops; but they generally get along marvellously well, allowing for their tender age.

The Alaskan Esquimaux sled is a rather heavy looking affair, nine or ten feet in length by about two in breadth, with thick, strong runners, often shod with pieces of solid whalebone. To the front of this is attached a strong rawhide thong or rope, eleven or twelve feet in length, to which the dogs are fastened by a simple harness, consisting in its most elaborate form, of a breast band and another strip passing over the back, and underneath the dog immediately behind his fore legs. The continuations of the breast band, passing backward on each side, join over the back, and from this junction is continued a short trace, by which the dog is fastened to the above mentioned rope, usually in equal numbers on each side, and one at the end. By this arrangement a great deal of the strength of the dog is wasted in side draft; notwithstanding this, it is probably the best that can be made, since it allows of no such irremediable snarling of the lines as would inevitably result were any more complicated arrangement adopted. A team of dogs will frequently stop when under full headway to engage in a general fight; and on being brought to order by an energetic use of the whip, both lash and stock, will jump to their places and proceed as before, without any confusion or entanglement whatever.

The amount of load carried on these sleds varies of course with the number and condition of the animals, but perhaps seventy-five pounds to a dog is a little above, rather than below the average. The greatest feat of this sort which came

under my observation was performed by one of the fort teams of eight dogs, all, with perhaps one exception, of pure Esquimaux breed, but the finest of their class, several of them fully equalling in size a Newfoundlander. They travelled about forty miles in a single day, part of the distance through freshly fallen and drifted snow, drawing, on one of the before mentioned heavy native sleds, nearly eight hundred pounds of reindeer meat; the whole, with the sled, probably approaching a thousand pounds in weight. I never heard of any team of Esquimaux dogs excelling this, but was informed by the late Major Kennicott that the Hudson Bay Company traders with a peculiar breed of introduced dogs, somewhat resembling the Danish mastiff, load their light sleds with an average allowance of about one hundred pounds to each dog.

The art of guiding the team by the whip and voice appears to be almost unknown among the Alaskan Esquimaux; it is customary with them to keep a man running ahead of the sled to show the way, the dogs following him instinctively. When, however, the route has been often travelled over before by the same team, or when there is a previously made sled track for the dogs to follow, the runner is sometimes dispensed with. In the sled teams of the Russian traders, and not so invariably in those of the natives, the leading dog is always the same, and often becomes so habituated and attached to this position, that he will resent being put in any other place in the team. These leaders are generally selected for their willingness to work; pluck and sagacity also being considered. Strength and size, though valuable in this position, are of secondary importance; a small plucky dog will sometimes achieve and hold this preëminence by sheer moral force, and a first-class leader holds it in his ordinary intercourse with the other dogs as well as when fastened up with them in harness. Much is trusted to the sagacity of a good leader, in the way of picking out the route, avoiding obstacles, etc. In fol-

lowing a previously made sled track he does not always follow it blindly, but will frequently cut across short turns and show a considerable exercise of judgment in other ways. In the winter of 1865–'66, a small party of Russian traders and Esquimaux employees, some half a dozen persons altogether, while travelling with dogs and sleds, between the mouth of the Yukon River and Fort St. Michael's, on Norton Sound, were caught in a very severe snow-storm near the southern point of St. Michael's Island, a flat marshy region, very much intersected by water channels winding in every direction. The driving snow completely obscured all the landmarks, and the early nightfall of these latitudes coming on about the same time, they became confused and lost their way entirely. Having in the party no compass or other means of directing their course, their only recourse was to call in the runner and trust to the intelligence of one of the leaders, an old dog which had been tried in similar emergencies and had not been found wanting, to bring them out of their peril. The plan succeeded; and under his guidance they arrived safely at their destination, a result which they all admitted could hardly have happened had they been left to their own direction. I give this story on the authority of the members of the party; the dog in question was unanimously praised for his knowingness. I can myself testify to his general sagacity. If his finding the way must be accounted for, I should attribute it to his previous knowledge of the country, rather than to instinct or power of scent, which does not appear to be very remarkably developed in this variety.

Most travellers have mentioned the voracity of these dogs in times of general scarcity. There appears then to be no limit to their appetite; nothing is safe from them; they will devour old boots, rawhide ropes, and have even been known to tear up and swallow cotton cloth and old rags. The dogs belonging to the natives undergo such periods of starvation pretty regularly, and many succumb nearly every

winter to the combined effects of want of food and hard work. There is also an epidemic disease which is very destructive some years, and is undoubtedly the same as that described by Dr. Hayes as occurring amongst his dogs on Smith's Sound during the winter of 1860–'61. As in the cases related by him, the symptoms closely resembled those of hydrophobia, but the disease does not appear to be so communicable by the bite. There seems also to be some connection between the disease and the nature and quantity of the food, as it was mostly confined in its ravages during the winter of 1865–'66 to the poorly and irregularly fed dogs of the natives, while the better cared for animals of the Russian traders suffered in a much less proportion. Genuine hydrophobia does sometimes occur; a most unmistakable case of it was observed during the summer of 1866.

During the summer months, from May to September, the dogs are fed only irregularly by most of their owners, and are sometimes left entirely to themselves to find their own living. In spite of this they usually manage to grow fat during this season, and to make up all they have lost in strength and substance during the winter. They supply themselves with fresh game, not only the smaller quadrupeds and grouse, but also occasionally running down a deer. Their hunting instincts are so strongly developed, that while travelling in the winter, if a reindeer or even a fox or rabbit is in sight, it is quite difficult to keep any control over the dogs, and the mere utterance of the word *tung tuk* (Esquimaux for reindeer) is often effectual to enliven a lagging team. Many dogs wander off after deer in the summer and are lost to their owners; and as comparatively few stray dogs are picked up, it appears that the greater number of these either revert to the wild state, or are destroyed by wolves and other beasts of prey. Wolves sometimes attack and carry off dogs from trading posts and villages. In the spring of 1866, a wolf attacked some twenty or thirty dogs just outside of the stockade at St. Michael's. The uproar

brought the whole force of workmen to the rescue, otherwise he would certainly have made way with one or more; for Esquimaux dogs in almost any number, are no match for a northern wolf.

Of the other breeds of dogs which are used as draught animals in the north, I have already mentioned the large dogs of the Hudson Bay Company's traders, which are known to me only by description. The Indian dogs appear, for the most part, like a very degraded variety derived from the wolf. A peculiar variety, of unknown origin, but probably from Europe or Siberia, was used to some extent by the Russians. In appearance it resembles the shepherd dog, but stands as high as a Newfoundlander. Its shape is slenderer than that of the native breed, and the hair is shorter, the colors are usually black or dark brown and white or tan, with a yellow spot over each eye, as in some of the terriers. They appear to be quite as hardy and serviceable as the native variety. I have known a team composed chiefly of dogs of this breed to travel with a light load over a well marked track, between sixty and seventy miles in a single day.

OUR COMMON FRESH-WATER SHELLS.

BY E. S. MORSE.

In this and a few succeeding papers we intend to give a brief outline of several groups of fresh-water mollusks common to the United States.

The intention is to make them useful to the young collector in enabling him to determine the generic names of the more common shells he may have in his collections, and to give him some idea of their habits and structure. He will also become acquainted with the specific names of the more common shells he meets with. Nothing more than a brief